The humble Supplication of Thomas

Iames Student in Diuinitie, and keeper of the publike Librarie at *Oxford, for reformation of the ancient Fathers VVorkes, by* Papists sundrie wayes depraued.

WHEREAS *the Workes of the ancient Fathers, and holy Councels, haue of late yeares beene most shamefully and wrongfully, manifestly and manifoldly corrupted and depraued, by authoritie from the* Church of Rome *to the maintenance of Poperie and superstition, as their sundrie* Indices Expurgatorij *daily practise, and euidence of the fact it selfe, doth abundantly declare, the falshood and enormities of whose noted corruptions, might within a verie short time, and for no great charges be discouered vnto the sight of the whole world: May it therefore please all such as are vnfained louers of the truth of Religion here in England at this day professed, and haters of all* Romish *corruptions, timely to prouide that there may not want due encouragement and maintenance for the effecting hereof by these orders following, or any other, which shall in the iudgement of the learned bee thought necessarie and conuenient.*

1 First, there may bee sixe discreete and sober students in Diuinitie elected chosen for this businesse; such as are Batchelers of Diuinitie and haue alreadie entred into the Ministerie.

2 These sixe so nominated and appointed, shall take a solemne and corporall oath, before they vndertake the worke, that they will faithfully and sincerely discharge their duties in this behalfe, truely relating and reporting the differences of the written Copies of or from the printed Bookes.

3 In this collation or comparing of Copies, they may obserue this order precisely, to take for printed Copies the last of the *Protestant* and *Popish* Editions: for the *Manuscript* or written Copies, to procure or get into their hands as many as can conueniently be had; which are very many throughout all *England*, and especially in both our Vniuersities, which are by confession of the aduersaries, very true and correct Copies.

4 Amongst so many written Copies, they shall chuse out foure of the most auncient and approoued Bookes, which shall bee exactly compared with the two beforementioned printed copies of the Fathers: the diuerse readings shall be noted in the margent of one of the printed Bookes. In places of greater moment and consequence in Religion, they shall consult all the auncient Copies, though they be neuer so many.

5 Hauing thus noted the differences, one of them (which shall be appointed for ouerseer of the whole businesse, and shall take vpon him the charge and burden hereof) shall gather and copie out into an other Booke, such places as shall bee thought most necessarie and conuenient to be reformed in the iudgement of the best learned Diuines, whose paines because they are to bee greater then the rest, his reward may be accordingly appointed.

6 To the end that they may more cheerfully and willingly bestow their paines in this so necessarie and profitable a businesse, they may haue such a reward and recompence assigned them, to be paid either quarterly, halfe yeare, or yearely at the furthest, as shall befit men that are ingenious, studious, and which is cheefly to be regarded, Diuines.

7 By reason of this reward or stipend, they shall be bound to bestow at the least foure or fiue houres euery day in this collation (Sundayes and holy-dayes excepted. If any one by businesse, sickenesse, or otherwise shall be hindered from comming to the rest, he shall be bound at his owne charges to find an other as sufficient as himselfe, which shall take the same oath that hee hath done.

8 Thus bestowing their paines for foure or fiue yeares together, without interruption or cessation, I make no doubt but that by Gods especiall grace they shall be able to bring the whole worke vnto a most happie and wished end.

9 To the end that students in Diuinitie may neither long be detained from the fruit of their labours, nor be at too great cost and charges in buying the Workes of the Fathers againe, it may be so ordered, that as soone as the collation of any of the Fathers Works shall be finished, & reuewed by the best Diuines, there shall be presently printed an Index in octauo, or quarto, which shall shew the corruptions of the printed copies of either Papists or Protestant Editions, which haue beene very lamentably abused in this kinde by too much trusting of the Papists.

10 The *Manuscript or written copies*, which shall be vsed in this Collation, shall after the collation is ended bee preserued, with all possible diligence and care, either in the priuate Libraries, of Colledges, & Cathedrall churches, or else in the publike Libraries of both our Vniuersities, as well for a perpetual Monument of this their paines taken: as also and especially for the further manifestation of their truthes and honesties in this behalfe. So that if any Papist shall question the readings thereof, he may see the copies whether it be so or no.

11 Lastly, for the antiquitie and veritie of the written Copies which are with vs at this day extant in England, in great store: though many of them be such as haue beene many hundred yeares agoe brought ouer into England from beyond the Seas, and bestowed in our Libraries, and other written as auncientlie by sundry Monkes and Friers here in this land, which were rather partiall against vs and our Religion then otherwise: yet we doe most willingly appeale vnto the truth of those Copies, and not onely vnto them, but vnto all other auncient Copies throughout Christendome whersoeuer.

God saue the King.

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